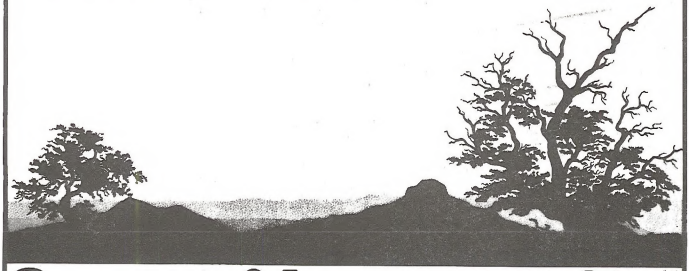
Rio Puerco



Resource Management Plan

PROGRAM DOCUMENT

ANNUAL UPDATE

1986

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT OFFICE
RIO PUERCO RESOURCE AREA

#26788766 ID: 86018093

United States Department of the Interior

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Dear Reader:

This document is the first yearly update for the Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan (RMP). The update document is intended to inform the public of our progress made in 1986 and the actions planned for 1987 to implement the RMP. The planned actions identified in the update are major implementation actions which would be of interest to the public. Interested members of the public (e.g. organizations, groups, individuals) are encouraged to contact us concerning the scheduled planned actions. Participation in the development of management or activity plans, and review of the Environmental Assessments for the plans are also encouraged.

This year's document also contains the update for our Range Program. In previous years, we have issued a Rangeland Management Program update document devoted specifically to reporting progress made in implementing the Rio Puerco Resource Area's three grazing environmental statements. In future years, progress for the Range Program will also be reported in the RMP Program Document Updates.

Our Final RMP was completed in November 1986 and copies are available upon request. If you would like a copy, send your request to Rio Puerco Resource Area Manager at the above address or telephone (505) 761-4504.

Continued public interest and involvement is neccessary to assure that the specific management actions to implement the RMP provides for the needs and concerns of the public land users. We look forward to continued public participation as the RMP is implemented in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Herrick E. Hanks

Herrick E. Hanks
Rio Puerco Resource Area
Manager

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM DOCUMENT
ANNUAL UPDATE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to update the public on implementation of the Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan (RMP), the land use plan for the Rio Puerco Resource Area (RPRA). Because implementation of the RMP will continue over a number of years, an update document will be issued in January or February of each year until the RMP is fully implemented or revised. Each yearly document will present information concerning the progress made in the previous year and the actions planned for the current year to implement the RMP. This first update document presents the accomplishments for calendar year 1986, and the planned actions together with completion schedules for calendar year 1987. If you wish to participate in the development of resource program activity plans or review the environmental assessments, please contact us. We encourage your participation in this phase of RMP implementation.

The implementation actions (completed and planned) contained in this update are presented by resource program in the same sequence as the Final RMP. The majority of the resource program implementation actions are presented in simple list format with a short one or two sentence description. A brief narrative ("Program Notes") is presented for the resource programs which require more detailed discussion. A list of the Environmental Assessments which were completed in calendar year 1986 is also provided (Appendix 1).

In addition, the planned actions address only those major actions, activity plans, and environmental assessments which warrant public participation. Project-specific developments (e.g., range improvements and sign placements) are not listed as planned actions. All scheduled planned actions are projections based on current priorities and budgets for the year.

If priorities and budget allocations shift during the year, the schedules for the planned actions may also change.

This year's document presents several key management actions planned for 1987. These actions are listed below, followed by a reference to the specific section of this document in which further discussion is provided. These key actions are as follows:

1. Exchange public lands (surface and minerals) in Torrance County for 28,000 acres of State land in El Malpais Special Management Area (LANDS AND REALTY Program section).

2. Acquire, through exchange, the New Mexico and Arizona Land Company mineral estate, approximately 58,000 acres, in El Malpais area (LANDS AND REALTY Program section).

3. Develop activity plans for ten Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA Program section).

RESOURCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

Energy and Minerals

Accomplishments

-Revised the Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations for the RPRA in August 1986. The revised stipulations were published in the Resource Management Plan, November 1986.

-The following table summarizes the mineral materials sales restrictions for the Special Management Areas (SMA's) implemented in August 1986.

Special Management Area	Acres Withdrawn	Conditional Sales Acres
Pelon Watershed		858
San Luis Mesa Raptor Area	640	8,369
Azabache Station		80
Big Bead Mesa	311	
Guadalupe Ruin and Community	485	
Elk Springs	40	9,682
Ojito	640	11,590
Ball Ranch		1,278
Torreon Fossil Fauna		2,981
Historic Homesteads		16
Canon Jarido		1,803
Jones Canyon		649
Headcut Prehistoric Community	2,274	
Cabezon Peak		5,053
Ignacio Chavez		43,134
Canon Tapia		906
Tent Rocks		10,504
Pronoun Cave Complex		938
Continental Divide Trail		715
1870's Wagon Trail		630
El Malpais		162,838
Petaca Pinta		5,363
Bluewater Canyon		89
TOTALS	4,332	267,534

Planned Actions

-The Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations will be reviewed in March 1987 to ensure that adequate protection is provided to Special Management Areas. The stipulations will be reviewed about every six months.

Soil, Water and Air

Accomplishments

-As part of the Water Use Inventory, eighty water sources (wells, springs, and reservoirs) were located and quantified in the Rio San Jose Watershed. The inventory is now complete for the Zuni River, Jemez River, and Rio San Jose watersheds.

-The development of comprehensive watershed plans has been initiated with completion of the Draft San Isidro Watershed Rehabilitation Plan. The plan proposes the utilization of small water control structures, check dams, and head-cut control gabions to control runoff flows and sediment transport on the 12,562 acre watershed.

-A cooperative agreement was developed with the Soil Conservation Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs in December 1986 to utilize the Geographic Information System computer programs for the organization of soil survey data.

Planned Actions

-Enter Soil Survey data for Cibola County in the Geographic Information System by June 1, 1987.

-Complete the RPRA Water Use Inventory by September 30, 1987.

-Finalize the San Isidro Watershed Rehabilitation Plan by September 30, 1987.

-Maintain five detention dams as part of the Dam Safety Program.

Range

Accomplishments

Program Notes. The Rio Puerco Rangeland Management Program Document was published for the last time as an independent update document in July 1986. Beginning this year, the

Rangeland Management Program updates will be contained in the RMP Program Document updates.

Last year's document provided an update of the progress made in implementing the RPRA's grazing environmental documents. The management objectives and actions proposed in the grazing environmental documents are incorporated into the Final RMP to provide a single comprehensive guide for management of the Range Program. Therefore, this document and future updates will no longer address implementation by environmental document area, but will present progress for the entire RPRA. If you are interested in the progress made to implement a specific environmental document, please contact the RPRA office.

Last year's publication also contained the initial Program Document for the grazing allotments considered in the RMP/EIS Vegetative Uses issue. Publication of the initial document was a requisite for the initiation of the grazing decision process for the Vegetative Uses issue grazing allotments.

-Decisions: Initial grazing decisions were issued for nine "I" selective management category allotments in the RMP/EIS Vegetative Uses issue area.

-Selective Management Categorization: The following table summarizes the grazing allotment categorizations at the end of 1986.

Category	Public Land Acres	Number of Allotments
"I" Improve	554,647	53
"M" Maintain	271,496	68
"C" Custodial	75,504	93
TOTALS	901,647	214

-Allotment Management Plans: Sixty-three management plans have been developed; twenty-four have been implemented.

-Allotment Evaluations: Evaluations of the available vegetative monitoring studies data were completed for thirty-four "I" selective management category allotments.

-Monitoring Studies: Range trend, utilization, actual use, and precipitation data were collected for fifty-three "I" selective management category allotments. The USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station completed the eighth year of data collection for their research studies.

-Rangeland Improvements: The following table lists the projects completed.

Project Number	Project Name
1636	Chijuilla Pond Development
5770	Cuba Administrative Site Fence
5786	Ojo Grande Spring Development
5730	Ojo Grande Pipeline Extension
5811	Guadalupe West Fence
5900	Arrosa Pipeline
5958	Raney Pipeline

Planned Actions

Program Notes. In recent years, the subleasing of public land grazing privileges has surfaced as a major issue and problem. As a result, the BLM policy concerning authorization of subleasing has changed. To ensure conformance to the new policy, procedures to detect subleasing have been initiated. All subleases are considered trespasses and will be pursued. Anyone considering entering into a sublease agreement, or with questions regarding subleasing, should contact the RPRA office.

The recently formed Albuquerque District Grazing Advisory Board met on January 23, 1987, for the first time. The elected representative for the RPRA is Manuel Martinez, P.O. Box 397, Cuba, New Mexico 87103.

-Decisions: In accordance with Section 8 of the 1978 Public Rangeland Improvement Act, consultation meetings are scheduled to begin in March 1987 for the thirty-four grazing allotments evaluated in 1986. The meetings are a mandated part of the grazing decision process to conclude the five year monitoring study period for these allotments. The consultation process is scheduled for completion by August 1, 1987, and the decisions will be developed and issued by September 30, 1987.

-Monitoring Studies: Vegetative studies (range trend, utilization, actual use, and precipitation) will be conducted on the "I" management category allotments.

The Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station will collect the ninth year of research studies data.

-Allotment Management Plans: A management plan will be developed for the Petoch Wash grazing allotment in eastern Cibola County by September 30, 1987.

-Rangeland Improvements: The pipeline users fee initiated in October 1985 will continue at $.50 per AUM. As of September 30, 1986, $21,976.50 had been collected, and $20,674.96 had been spent for maintenance, repair, and electricity. The balance of $1,301.54 has been carried forward to assist with the current year's expenses. Continued cooperation by all parties is needed to keep the pipeline systems operational.

Wildlife

Accomplishments

-El Malpais Habitat Management Plan provides for the reintroduction of desert bighorn sheep into the lava flow. As a requisite to reintroduction, a feasibility study was conducted and completed in September 1986. The study concluded that the area did not contain sufficient quality habitat to sustain a viable resident herd. Therefore, desert bighorn sheep will not be considered for reintroduction into El Malpais at this time.

Planned Actions

-The Bluewater Canyon Interim ACEC Plan Element will be reviewed and evaluated by August 1, 1987.

-Evaluations of important wildlife habitat located on eight grazing allotments in El Malpais area will continue.

-A wildlife watering facility for an important habitat area located on the Ojo Hallado grazing allotment will be installed by July 1, 1987.

Woodland Resources

Accomplishments

Program Notes. Last year, an active management program for the forests and woodlands in the RPRA was initiated. The major emphasis for the program is to ensure that healthy, viable ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper stands are maintained for long-term public use and enjoyment. Proper stand management requires the application of a variety of environmentally sound silvicultural treatments (e.g., thinnings, mortality cuts, salvage cuts, prescribed burning, and planting). To ensure that no significant environmental impacts occur, an environmental assessment is required prior to the authorization of any stand treatment. Several silvicultural treatments were performed this year to improve stand vigor, improve reproductive potential, and prepare for future reforestation projects. In the coming years, a continued emphasis and effort will be placed on proper management of the forests and woodlands in the RPRA.

-Timber Sales: The following table summarizes the sales for 1986.

Sale Name	Date	Acres	Harvest (MBF)*
Chijuilla Arroyo	April 1986	210	136
Chijuilla Mesa Salvage Cut	August 1986	80	25
Seed Cone Cut	Oct. 1986	40	21
TOTALS		330	182

*MBF=Thousand Board Feet

-Reforestation: As a result of the Seed Cone Timber Sale, fifty-five bushels of prime seed bearing ponderosa pine cones were collected for future reforestation projects.

-Fuelwood Sales: The Upper Rio Puerco was again open to dead-and-down wood collection, with 390 cords sold. Several new home-use sale areas were also opened. The following table summarizes the home-use sales from the new areas for this year.

Sale Name	Sale Date	Acres	Harvest (cords)
J-22	July 1986	100	72
Chijuilla Arroyo	Oct. 1986	210	25
Juniper Special	Dec. 1986	3800	236
TOTALS		4110	333

-Christmas Tree Sales: In response to public demand, 550 Christmas trees were sold from approximately 160 acres in an old pinyon-juniper chaining area.

-Coordination meetings were conducted between BLM law enforcement officials and representatives from New Mexico State Forestry to establish procedures for reducing the unauthorized removal of forest and woodland products from public lands within the RPRA.

Planned Actions

-Two timber sales will be conducted in the Chijuillita Mesa and Shroyer areas during March 1987. The sales will be conducted to prepare the areas for ponderosa pine seedling planting. The Shroyer area is scheduled to be planted in August 1987.

-The juniper special home-use fuelwood sale area will remain open through April 1987. The sale will provide a source of juniper to meet public demand and will remove juniper which has invaded ponderosa pine habitat.

-Timber and home-use fuelwood sales will be conducted on Chijuillita Mesa. The timber harvest scheduled for April 1987 will be by selective cut to improve ponderosa pine vigor and reproductive potential. Fuelwood sales, scheduled for May and October 1987, will remove pinyon-juniper which has invaded ponderosa pine habitat.

-Two timber sales to salvage marketable timber from deteriorated sites in the Chijuillita Mesa area will be conducted in August 1987.

-A commercial fuelwood sale will be conducted on Chijuilla Mesa during August 1987. Selected trees which have encroached into ponderosa pine habitat will be removed.

-A Christmas tree sale area will be established if there is a demand.

Recreation

Planned Actions

-A recreation management plan for the State Highway 117 Scenic Corridor is scheduled for completion by June 1, 1987. The plan will cover approximately one-half mile on each side of a thirty-two mile stretch along State

Highway 117 from its intersection with Interstate 40 south to the Pie Town Road turnoff.

Off-Road Vehicles

Accomplishments

-Three motorcycle events were authorized in the San Ysidro Motorcycle Trials Area. An environmental assessment was completed for each event prior to issuance of the permit.

-The annual "Oh My God 100" desert motorcycle race was conducted in May 1986. An environmental assessment which also addressed post-race mitigation measures was prepared prior to issuance of the permit.

Planned Actions

-A brochure describing the RPRA off-road vehicle designations will be prepared. The brochure should be available in April 1987.

-An application requesting a two year permit to conduct trials motorcycle events in the San Ysidro Motorcycle Trials Area has been received. An environmental assessment has been completed to ensure that no significant environmental impacts will occur.

-An application for the "Oh My God 100" desert motorcycle race has been received. The race course will be cooperatively laid out by BLM specialists and the applicant to ensure environmental impacts and conflicts with other resource uses will be minimized. The race is scheduled for May 17, 1987. An environmental assessment has been completed to ensure that no significant environmental impacts will occur and to identify mitigating measures.

Wilderness

Accomplishments

-Wilderness Analysis Reports were prepared for the following listed twelve Wilderness Study Areas as part of the development of the BLM New Mexico Statewide Environmental Impact Statement.

Wilderness Study Area	Public Land Acres
Cabezon	8,159
Empedrado	9,007
Ignacio Chavez	33,264
Chamisa	13,692
La Lena	10,438
Manzano	881
Ojito	10,903
Petaca Pinta	11,668
Rimrock	29,818
Sand Canyon	8,543
Little Rimrock	9,920
Pinyon	12,365
TOTAL	158,658

Planned Actions

-An Interim Management Plan will be developed for the Manzano Wilderness Study Area by April 1, 1987.

-Wilderness Analysis Reports will be revised as necessary for inclusion in the Statewide Wilderness Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Lands and Realty

Accomplishments

-Twenty color-of-title cases were processed and eleven patents for a total of 78.6 acres were issued as part of the continuing Rio Grande Occupancy Resolution Program.

-Right-of-way applications were processed for two communication sites, two oil and gas roads, an underground telephone line, and a water test drilling project.

-Reviews were conducted for three public land withdrawals and eight mineral withdrawals. As a result of the reviews, a Public Water Resources Power Site withdrawal was relinquished.

-The Pitchford/Stephenson land exchange was completed. As a result of the exchange, 320 acres of private land containing important cultural resource values were acquired. To acquire the private lands, 320 acres of public land southeast of Ramah, New Mexico were exchanged. The exchange was based on an equal value assessment, not an acre for acre exchange.

-Land-use authorizations were processed for a radon monitoring station, a shallow oil field test project, a temporary gate, and a Boy Scout clean up project.

-As a result of the Navajo Land Exchange, 77,161 acres of private land in Cibola and Valencia Counties were acquired. To acquire the private lands, 55,638 acres of public land in the Farmington Resource Area were exchanged. The exchange was based on an equal value assessment, not an acre for acre exchange.

-A patent was issued conveying 67 acres of public land to the Village of Cuba for a fairground site.

-An exchange was initiated to acquire approximately 58,000 acres of New Mexico/ Arizona Land Company mineral estate in El Malpais area.

-A proposal was prepared to initiate land exchanges with the State of New Mexico.

Planned Actions

Program Notes. The major emphasis for the Land and Realty Program will be the continuation of the mineral and land exchanges initiated late in 1986. All exchanges will be based on equal value assessments.

The New Mexico and Arizona Land Company mineral exchange will be conducted in two phases. For the first phase, suitable Federal mineral estate in Cibola, Valencia, and McKinley Counties has been identified to offer in exchange for approximately 22,000 acres of private mineral estate. The Federal mineral estate identified for exchange is of comparable value to those which would be acquired in El Malpais. The Land Report/Environmental Assessment for the first phase of the exchange is scheduled to be completed by September 30, 1987. For the second phase, suitable Federal mineral estate will be identified this year to offer in exchange for approximately 36,000 acres. The environmental assessment work to complete the second phase will be performed in 1988.

As a result of the proposal submitted to the State of New Mexico in 1986, a major exchange has been initiated. The exchange would result in a trade of approximately 28,000 acres of State lands in El Malpais for public lands in Torrance County. The BLM and the State Land Office have cooperatively identified blocks of public land in Torrance County which will be considered in exchange for State lands in El Malpais. The Land Report/Environmental Assessment for the exchange is scheduled for completion by September 30, 1987.

The Navajo Land Exchange will be completed in 1987. An additional 2,702 acres of private land in Cibola and Valencia Counties will be acquired. Public lands in the Farmington Resource Area will be offered in exchange.

Planned Actions

-Approximately ten new color-of-title cases will be processed and twenty color-of-title patents will be issued for the Rio Grande Occupancy Resolution Program.

-Applications for rights-of-way, land-use authorizations, and Recreation and Public Purpose leases will be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Cultural Resources

Accomplishments

-Quarterly monitoring inspections were performed on Guadalupe and Candelaria ruins.

Planned Actions

-A Class I cultural resource inventory will be completed by June 1987 for the BLM-State of New Mexico land exchange.

-A Class I cultural resource inventory will be completed by May 1987 for the BLM-New Mexico and Arizona Land Company mineral exchange.

-A Class III cultural resource inventory will be conducted by July 1987 to complete the Macbeth land exchange.

-Quarterly monitoring inspections of Guadalupe and Candelaria ruins will be conducted.

Special Management Areas

Accomplishments

-Ten Areas of Critical Environmental (ACEC's) were designated on January 16, 1986, with the approval of the Record of Decision for the Rio Puerco RMP.

Planned Actions

Program Notes. Activity plans will be developed for each of the designated ACEC's. The plans will be developed in two phases. The first phase of the plans will be the protection component which will prescribe the management measures needed to protect the resource values in the area. The second phase will be the utilization component of the plan which will define how the resource values in the area will be managed. The protection plan components for seven of the ACEC's are scheduled to be completed by September 1, 1987. The first phase for the other three ACEC's will be initiated this year. The second phase will be initiated as funding permits. Draft environmental assessments addressing the management actions proposed in each ACEC protection plan component will be completed by July 1, 1987.

-Plan Development: The following table lists the ACEC plan development schedule for this year.

ACEC	Total Acres	Protection Plan
Torrejon Fossil Fauna	2,981	initiate
Jones Canyon	649	initiate
San Luis Mesa Raptor Area	10,447	complete
Cabezon Peak	5,765	complete
Canon Tapia	1,093	complete
Elk Springs	10,300	complete
Tent Rocks	5,354	complete
Ojito	13,657	complete
Ball Ranch	1,278	complete
Pronoun Cave Complex	1,194	initiate

APPENDIX 1

Rio Puerco Resource Area Environmental Assessments
Calendar Year 1986

Number	Name	Status
NM-017-86-4	Ned's Tank Timber Sale	Denied
NM-017-86-6	Centrex Quarry	Approved 2/24/86
NM-017-86-8	MCI Telecommunication (R-O-W)	Approved 2/21/86
Nm-017-86-9	Chijuilla Livestock Corral	Approved 6/23/86
NM-017-86-10	Tinaja Limestone Pit	Approved 2/21/86
NM-017-86-11	Moleres Livestock Water Well	Approved 3/27/86
NM-017-86-12	Rimrock WSA Boy Scout Camp	Approved 3/14/86
NM-017-86-13	Moloeres Livestock Water Well	Approved 4/14/86
NM-017-86-14	NM Trials Assoc. (Permit)	Approved 4/13/86
NM-017-86-15	Arrossa Coop Pipeline (livestock water)	In Review
NM-017-86-16	Marmon Coop Pipeline (livestock water)	Approved 4/14/86
NM-017-86-18	NM Museum of Natural History (excavation)	Approved 5/9/86
NM-017-86-19	Mirabal Pipeline (Section 12, livestock water)	Approved 3/2/87
NM-017-86-20	Communications Site R-O-W	Approved 5/1/86
NM-017-86-21	NM Museum of Natural History (surface collection)	Approved 5/9/86
NM-017-86-22	Balok Coop Rangeland Seeding	In Review
NM-017-86-23	Ball Ranch Livestock Water (trough)	Approved 5/23/86
NM-017/86-24	SORE Desert Motorcycle Race	Approved 5/15/86
NM-017-86-25	Chijuilla Thinning Project (forestry)	Approved 6/18/86
NM-017-86-26	Chijiulla Mesa Salvage Cut (forestry)	Approved 6/17/86
NM-017-86-27	J-22 Fuelwood Sale	Approved 7/11/86
NM-017-86-28	Mirabal Pipeline (Section 28, livestock water)	Approved 3/2/87
NM-017-86-29	"North Pasture" Hydrologic Test Drilling	Approved 6/19/86
NM-017-86-30	"Badger Butte" Hydrologic Test Drilling	Approved 6/19/86
NM-017-86-33	Shroyer Forest Development	Approved 9/9/86
NM-017-86-34	BLM/USGS (Coal Branch) Test Drilling	Approved 9/10/86
NM-017-86-35	Rainey Pipeline (livestock water)	Approved 9/2/86
NM-017-86-38	Pinos Arroyo Rangeland Seeding	Approved 10/14/86
NM-017-87-01	NM Trials Association (Trials Bike Permit)	Approved 3/21/87
NM-017-87-02	Chijuillita Mesa Forest Management Plan	Approved 2/24/87
NM-017-87-03	Geophysical Exploration (Empedrado, La Lena and I C Grant WSA's)	Denied
NM-017-87-04	Geophysical Exploration in the RPRA	Approved 11/10/86
NM-017-87-05	Southwest Materials (Sand and Gravel)	Approved 11/14/86

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